

CLAIMS

1. A practice putting device comprising a single generally L-shaped free-standing housing which in use is placed in a first position on a generally flat horizontal support surface over which a golf ball can be putted towards the device, with the rear of one limb of the housing in contact with the flat surface and the other limb pointing in a generally upward direction in the said first position, each of the limbs defining a ball guide and having an upper surface, the upper surface of the said one limb presenting a ramp up which a golf ball can roll after being putted towards the device, such that in use as a golf ball arrives at the top of the ramp a turning moment is created which causes the device to pivot like a see saw from the first position to a second position in which the rear of the said other limb is now in contact with the said flat horizontal surface, and its upper surface comprises a second ramp down which the ball can roll.
2. A device as claimed in claim 1 wherein at least the said other limb includes side cheeks so that a ball will not tend to roll sideways thereoff.
3. A device as claimed in claim 1 wherein both of the limbs include side cheeks to prevent a ball from rolling sideways off the device.
4. A device as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3 wherein the underside of the device comprises a fulcrum about which the device will rock, in use.
5. A device as claimed in any of claims 1 to 4 wherein the rocking of the housing from its first to its second position is further assisted by the impact of the ball on the upwardly pointing limb.

6. A device as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5 wherein the upper surface of the ball guide of either or both of the two limbs is dished centrally so as to present a valley between two inclined sides, which in use assists in guiding a ball up or down the limb.

7. A device as claimed in claim 4, 5 or 6 wherein a turning moment about the fulcrum created by the weight of the said one limb is greater than that due to the weight of the said other limb acting in the opposite sense about the fulcrum, so that in the absence of a ball the device has only one stable position in which the said one limb is in contact with the support surface, whereby in use after a ball leaves the said other limb the device will rock back and assume its said first position, ready to receive another putt.

8. A device as claimed in any of claims 4, 5 or 6 wherein a turning moment of one limb is substantially the same as that due to the other, so that in the absence of a ball the device has two stable positions in which one or the other of the two limbs is in contact with the support surface, whereby the device will remain in the said second position after the ball has left the device, ready to receive a second putt, albeit this time from the opposite direction.

9. A device as claimed in claim 8 wherein in use following a second putt the ball will run up the ball guide surface of the said other limb, causing the device to rock back into its first stable position, which enables the ball to leave the device by rolling down the upper surface of the ball guide of the said one limb, and leave the device ready to receive a putt from the original direction.

10. A device as claimed in any of claims 1 to 6 wherein a barrier is fitted across one of the limbs which prevents a ball from running off the limb, and serves to retain the ball thereon, thereby causing the device to remain in its said second position.

11. A device as claimed in claim 10 wherein the limbs include the side cheeks and the barrier is fitted between the side cheeks of the limb.

12. A device as claimed in claim 11 wherein the barrier is adapted to be snap-fitted between side cheeks of the limb, and is removable therefrom when not required.

13. A device as claimed in claim 1 which in use is to rock from one position to another as a ball arrives at the top of one ramp following a successful putt to allow the ball to leave the device down the other ramp and to remain in the said other position until another successful putt from the opposite direction causes a ball to run up the other ramp and cause the device to rock back into its said one position so that the ball will roll down the said one ramp to leave the device, wherein the turning moment acting about the rocking axis due to the weight of one limb, is substantially the same as that due to the weight of the other limb.

14. A device as claimed in claim 1 wherein the device is to rock back into the said first position each time a ball leaves, and the turning moment about the rocking axis due to the weight of one limb is greater than that due to the other limb, so that there will be a net turning moment about the fulcrum after a ball has left the said other limb, causing the device to rock back so that the said other limb is again pointing generally upwardly.

15. A device as claimed in claim 10, 11 or 12 in which the ball is to be retained in the device after a successful putt, and the device is stable in its first position with the first limb presenting a ramp up which the ball will roll following a successful putt, and is such that when a ball reaches the upper end of that ramp, the centre of gravity of the device is shifted so as to produce a turning moment which will cause the device to rock into a second position, so that the ball will try to leave the device down the ramp in the said other limb but will be retained thereon, thereby maintaining the turning moment which caused the device to rock, and retaining the device in its second position.

16. A device as claimed in any of claims 3 to 15 wherein the side cheeks extend above and below the ball guide of each limb.

17. A device as claimed in any of claims 2 to 16 wherein those parts of the side cheeks of the first limb which are below the ball guide extend beyond the junction between the two limbs on the underside of the device and the extensions define the fulcrum so that it is nearer the exit end of the second limb than the entrance end of the first limb, so that when the device pivots and the underside of the second limb comes into contact with the flat horizontal surface, there will be a part of the second limb as well as the whole of the first limb on the other side of the fulcrum, thereby increasing the net turning force acting on the device to restore it to its first position, after the ball rolls off the device.

18. A device as claimed in claim 17 wherein the extensions of the side cheeks of the first limb form two runners similar to the runners of a rocking chair, which extend beyond the junction between the two limbs so that as the device rocks on a flat horizontal support surface, the points of engagement between the two runners and the surface define a fulcrum line, which moves in the general direction in which the device is rocking, so that the axis of pivoting moves relative to the device as it rocks from one position to the other.

19. A device as claimed in claim 18 wherein as the axis of pivoting moves so also does the centre of gravity of the device, so that in use the centre of gravity remains on the same side of the fulcrum line to produce a restoring turning movement to rock the device back into its first position.

20. A method of practise putting when using a device as claimed in claim 7 in which a ball is free to run off the device after a successful putt from a given location, and wherein the device rocks back and reverts to its first position after the ball rolls clear of the device, wherein a player putts a number of balls in succession towards the device, from the same given location.

21. A method of practise putting when using a device as claimed in claim 8 or 9 which has two stable positions in either of which it will remain without a ball remaining on the device so that the device remains in its last tipped position as a ball runs off the device, wherein after successfully putting a ball so that it now lies beyond the device, the player

walks to where the ball has come to rest and putts it back towards the device, up the ball guide ramp it previously had used to exit the device, thereby causing the device to rock back to its other position to allow the ball to run down the ball guide ramp which it had previously run up from the first putt, so that only one ball is needed.

22. A method of practise putting when using a device as claimed in claim 10, 11 or 12 wherein the ball is retained in the device so that the device remains in the second position after a successful putt, and after each such putt, the player uses his putter to tap the elevated limb of the device to cause it to pivot backwards and revert to its former position with the undersides of the side cheeks of the first limb once again on the support surface, so that the ball, which has been nested in the device, is now free to roll back down the ball guide of the first limb and leave the device in the direction from which it was putted, ready to be putted again towards the waiting device.

23. A practice putting device constructed, arranged and adapted to operate substantially as herein described with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.